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"LAWS, LAW-MAKERS, AND LIBRARIES"

REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY
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I am pleased and honored to have this opportunity of meeting once again with the members of the American Library Association.

When Emerson Greenaway, your legislative chairman, asked me to join you this evening, I wondered briefly if I had any views to share with you that I had not already expressed on earlier occasions.

I believe I have. One idea is the result of a number of informal conversations which I have had at different times with many of you. It is simply that too few librarians have a realistic image of the present and potential role of their libraries in American society.

Librarians should examine the basic concept of a library. This concept must be big enough, bold enough, and imaginative enough to accommodate the present and future role of libraries in education.

All libraries have more users today than ever before. The needs of these users are more specialized, more diverse and more expensive to meet than ever before.

Independent study and wide ranging collateral reading are now being emphasized at the secondary and even at the elementary school level. Serious students now come in all age brackets and they bring with them much more sophisticated demands on libraries of all types.

I would not say that libraries are too important to entrust to librarians, but I am convinced that libraries are the touchstone of American education. If we can make all our libraries equal to the jobs they face, we will guarantee an educational system of excellence unequalled anywhere in the world or anytime in history.

I agree with Martin Mayer, author of "The Schools", when he says that "the library . . . is the only place in education where excellence can be assured by the expenditure of money. Given a librarian who knows his business and who reads, the quality of a library is a simple function of the cash spent."

I believe that the educational product which libraries represent is more important and more attractive to legislators and to the public than even librarians themselves realize. I hope this legislative workshop which you are now conducting recognizes fully this central fact.

You librarians need not, and should not, plead with hat in hand for a few dollars more than you received last year from your appropriating authorities. Instead of that, you should think bigger and plan better so that you can share your vision of good library service with all those who use and who help support your institutions.

One of our greatest sociologists, the late Edward L. Thorndike, recognized that good libraries are part of the basic foundation for a "great society". He often noted that a well-supported public library is a universal characteristic of an intelligent, progressive community. I believe he was right when he suggested that we can measure the ambitions, the cultural and intellectual interests, and the social goals of any community by the quality of its libraries.

Only when we see what libraries ought to be can we appreciate our present position. Our growing national concern with all aspects of education has made possible some progress but much is yet to be done. Our school libraries, or rather the lack of them, is a national disgrace. Our college and university libraries, even those with the largest and best of our

research collections, are not able to keep up with either the output or the demands of our scholars and scientists. Our public libraries show steady improvement but not at the rate that is required if we are to achieve even minimum adequacy in a reasonable time. The only solution is more money. And the money must be available soon enough, and in amounts large enough to really reduce this tremendous gap.

I am proud of the accomplishments of the rural Library Services Act. I am impressed with the rapid progress made by the States in implementing the new Library Services and Construction Act. But none of us can pause now in our efforts to speed up and to enlarge these modest beginnings. We cannot afford to stand still or to accept horse and buggy progress in a supersonic era. I was deeply disappointed to learn, for example, that the administration has made no request for an increased appropriation under the LSCA for fiscal year 1966. This decision was made in spite of the fact that the Department of HEW asked for an additional \$20 million for the LSCA. I pledge you my best efforts to keep this fine program moving at a really useful level.

We can all take encouragement from other promising beginnings at the national level. The Higher Education Facilities Act will help promote more adequate buildings for our academic libraries. The inclusion of school librarians under Title XI of NDEA will help upgrade school library personnel. I am impressed with the educational proposals of this administration which seek to provide substantial Federal assistance for the purchase of books and other library materials for elementary and secondary school libraries. Matching grants for college and university library materials, and funds

for training and research in librarianship will also be provided by these proposals. They are promising beginnings, but let us acknowledge that they are only the beginning.

Those of us who are committed to good libraries and to a strong educational system must work for the passage of these and related bills. Then librarians and others must work for the most efficient and economical use of the funds available. At that point, we can see what else needs to be done for continued improvement.

These programs have a twofold significance for us here tonight. First, they demonstrate a recognition that the development of good libraries is in the national interest. Second, when taken together, they represent a broadly-based approach to many different problems faced by our libraries. These library programs are evidence of the appropriate leadership role of the Federal Government.

It is my hope that they will also serve to encourage the States to meet State and local responsibilities for continued library growth and development. During the past few years, the people of Rhode Island, for example, have awakened to the needs of their public libraries. A comprehensive program of State grants-in-aid is now underway that will upgrade and equalize the quality of public libraries throughout the State. This program is also an excellent example of how a State can become a full partner with Federal and local governments in providing for better libraries.

One of my dreams is that a system of libraries serving Rhode Island will become a model for the Nation. The new Rhode Island library law will eliminate years of neglect, and will help provide the books, the libraries,

and the librarians which have been so badly needed. Many of you are familiar with these achievements in Rhode Island and you know that none of them occurred by accident. Any successful legislative program is the result of careful foresight and planning plus plenty of intelligent hard work by a lot of people.

In the planning stage, Rhode Island had the benefit of a comprehensive survey of library conditions. This study was sponsored by Brown University through a grant from the Council on Library Resources. The organization of the survey was an excellent example of cooperation between librarians and educators, and between universities and public libraries in Rhode Island. The publication of this survey was followed by the creation of a "Legislative Commission on Libraries". The job of the Commission was to study existing library laws, to evaluate the statewide library survey, and to recommend a new legislative program.

The Commission, under the able chairmanship of Mr. Kay K. Moore of the Brown University Library, was organized in May, 1962. The group met 39 times before completing its final report in 1964. This hard-working Commission had active assistance from its Legislative members: State Senators John Moran and Charles Link; State Representatives Joseph Thibeault and Rufus Prosser. As the work of this Commission progressed, a "Clearinghouse for Library Study" was established under the direction of Mrs. Edwin F. Sherman, Jr., a member of the Providence Public Library Board of Trustees. The main task of the clearinghouse was to acquaint State legislators and the general public with the statewide survey and with the legislative proposals advanced by the Commission on Libraries. All these efforts culminated in success on May 8, 1964 when the Rhode Island General Assembly approved Chapter 233, Public Laws 1964.

I hope you don't think I am boasting about my own State. This is not my purpose. Rhode Island can take pride in its achievements, but I use it tonight only as an example of what any State can do to work for better libraries.

New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Florida, and California could also be cited as examples of States conducting successful legislative campaigns in recent years. Many elements are common to each. First and foremost is a professionally sound program for library improvement contained in a clear and comprehensive library bill. Libraries do not stand apart from the American political process and, therefore, their prospects are directly linked to legislative action. Without a library bill that has unified support by the profession and wide public understanding the chance of success is slight. This support and understanding will be achieved only if the bill is carefully drafted to accomplish its goals and only if it is presented with imagination, with intelligence, and with enthusiasm.

Let's assume that a State has drafted, at least in tentative form, a library bill. Where do we go from there? Support, like charity, begins at home. First, the librarians, library staff members, and library trustees must be given a full understanding of the proposal and must participate in shaping its final form. These people need to know the purposes and effects of the bill on their individual library situations. Before you grasp a legislative lapel, be sure the library interests are speaking with one clear voice. The success of your Federal legislation for public libraries has rested primarily on this kind of solidarity.

The second step is to remind yourselves that libraries do not exist to provide employment for librarians. They exist to serve the people who need and use their resources and facilities. Try to give all of the people all of the facts. Tell them the problems facing the library. Show them why this particular library bill is needed. Describe to them its effect on library services. Tell them how it relates to existing library laws. And tell them how much it will cost. The public is entitled to accurate and complete information on these and related points in your program. This part of the job is basically public information. Use radio, television, direct mail, and group meetings. Enlist the friends of libraries to help tell the story. Document your case with fair and accurate statistical data. Use actual examples and case studies to dramatize the library situation. Anticipate objections or opposition so that you can prepare objective arguments, but don't be afraid to change or to compromise if you find out you're on the wrong track.

To do this job well takes time, money, and good organization. But the dividends are large. You will not only achieve a solid base of public support, but you will also gain acceptance when the bill becomes law and when it is administered. This is a good head start on putting the law to work efficiently and economically in order to produce results in the shortest possible time.

Now let's get to the legislators themselves. Here are the people who will decide the fate of your library bill. Whether your contacts will be at the local, the State, or the Federal level, you will find that the lawmakers are subject to infinite distractions and countless demands on their time. Nearly all of them will be hard-working men and women trying to do a conscientious job. I can also assure you that they are all human.

They will react to praise or blame or threats or sincere friendship in much the same way that you yourselves do.

I would like to suggest an "ABC" for dealing with your legislators. "A" is for accuracy. Be absolutely sure you have your facts straight. If you don't, any inaccuracies or ambiguities will catch up with you sooner or later, usually at the worst possible time. If you have a weak spot in your case or if you lack some kind of information, do all you honestly can to strengthen it. Don't try to hide it with a smoke screen of double talk.

"B" is for brevity. Whether your contact is in person or in writing, reduce it to the minimum amount needed to present your case. Make all the important points connected with your library bill, but don't bury each one under fifty pages of mimeographed paper. If any of your contacts want additional information, they will ask for it.

"C" is for clarity. Be sure that your bill and the need for it is understood. Library problems, like most others, can get very complicated in detail. But the main needs, the major provisions of the bill, and the benefits of it can nearly always be stated clearly and simply.

These "ABC's" for legislative relations are really not much different than those you would use in your public information program. All you want is to get across your ideas correctly, clearly, and concisely. But when your bill is actually introduced into the legislative process, there are some real differences. Up to this point, you have been engaged in informing others about your position. Now is the time to do some informing of yourselves.

You must now learn the sequence of procedures which your bill will follow and you must get to know those legislators who will be involved with it at each point. These particulars will vary from State to State, but you must always know exactly where your bill is at any given moment and what action is needed at what time.

When the bill is under active consideration, be sure your legislative contacts are relevant. Don't send a form letter urging support for your bill by a legislator who is already listed as a sponsor. Learn the other interests of the legislators with whom you deal. In my case, for example, you know of my strong belief in good libraries. I feel this commitment to libraries partly because of other concerns which I have. One of these is better mental and community health services. Because I know that a good library can be a center for health information and a positive force for the mental well-being of an entire community, I am naturally sympathetic to the improvement of library services. This example can be repeated in many other subject areas of interest to individual lawmakers.

This kind of acquaintance with individual legislators is essential for those times when strategic action is needed on a bill. The problem may be in getting it out of a committee, having the hearing scheduled, or agreeing on an amendment. Whatever it is, you need to know the key person who can help move it along.

In this connection, I want to say a word about lobbyists, or legislative representatives, if the other term bothers you. The ALA, through the very able Germaine Krettek, performs a genuine public service from their Washington office. Miss Krettek is always honest, always helpful,

and she can be depended upon to give those of us in the Congress the information we need. My respect for librarians and their professional organization has continued to grow because of this relationship of mutual trust and good faith. If I were you, I'd get Gerrie to help you build this kind of relationship between your State library associations and your State legislatures.

States which are ready to move ahead with proposals need a state-level Gerrie Krettek. The programs in Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, and Oregon have had vital support from people who could give the job enough time and thought to do it right.

Earlier, I mentioned a program of library development based on a partnership among all levels of government. In terms of library service, this kind of partnership should involve the library collections and facilities at the local, the State, the regional and the Federal levels. Librarians are making good progress toward bringing to bear any library resource for the benefit of any user.

I would like to suggest that the same partnership be extended to include our library laws and those responsible for making and for administering those laws. The legal organization of our libraries and their sources of financial support should reflect the idea of a network of facilities serving the entire Nation. I think the library profession can and should identify the appropriate responsibilities of each level of government. Then you should work for legislation and for funds so that each level can discharge its responsibilities adequately and efficiently.

I suspect that city councils, working to improve their local libraries, do not know enough about the kinds of support they should expect from their State and Federal governments. I also wonder if State legislators understand the role of the State in building better libraries. We should help them realize that good libraries are not just a local-Federal enterprise, but that the State is a vital part of the whole.

It seems to me that our legislative directions for the future may follow two parallel roads. The first is the systematic identification of the respective responsibilities of different governmental units. Let us search out the strengths and weaknesses of our present legal structure and work to make it more responsive to the needs of all library users.

The second road leads to a legislative partnership which can solve some of the persistent problems facing libraries. You know what these are better than I do, but some are of particular interest to me. One is the problem of library personnel. We must have more librarians who are better trained and better paid if we are to reach our mutual goals. Another is the revolution in information science. Called by whatever name, the process of acquiring, organizing, preserving, and disseminating information is the essence of librarianship. Our libraries and librarians must be equipped to respond to the present deluge of scientific and scholarly information.

A third interest of mine which is also intimately tied to sound legislation is the effective coordination of libraries of all types. Such coordination is essential if our growing, ever more highly trained population is to have the kind of library services which it needs to produce enlightened and productive citizens.

These are some of the goals which I can see before us. Their scope is large, perhaps larger than ever before, But the stakes are large too, perhaps as large as the continued healthy growth of the American Nation.

I hope you share some of the vision and some of these goals with me.

I know that our ultimate goal has never been in doubt. By working together, as librarians, as legislators, and as citizens, we will reach the goal of good library service to every American.